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NOTICE.

All communications must be addressed, "Editor of the Louisianian," and anonymous letters must be accompanied by the name of the writer not necessarily for publication, but as an evidence of good faith.

ALL DAY LONG.

All day long the winds have whispered, As they passed my open door, Of each voice, to whose sweet music I shall listen nevermore:

"OUR STORY TELLER."

JOHN ECCLESTON'S THANKS-GIVING.

[FROM HARPER'S MONTHLY.]

There was a brilliant smile on his face, and a light jocose tone to his voice to fit these words; but in his eyes there was a watchful anxiety all the time. And her whole manner was just as airy and sportive as she replied:

THE LOUISIANIAN.

"REPUBLICAN AT ALL TIMES, AND UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES."

VOLUME 1.

NEW ORLEANS LA., SUNDAY, JANUARY 29th., 1871.

NUMBER 11.

First Day's Proceedings.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES January 2, 1871.

The House was called to order at 12 M., by William Vigers, Chief Clerk, who proceeded to call the roll as returned by the Secretary of State, and the following members responded to their names:

- Messrs. Abel, Adolphe, Antoine, Baker, Barker, Barrett, Barrow, Belot, Bentley, Bickham, Blunt, Bowen, Brewster, Broussard, Brown, Bryan, Buchanan, Burch, Butler, Carr, Carter, Darby, Darinsburg, Davidson, Davis, Demas, Dewees, Douglas, Durio, Faulkner, Floyd, Fontelien, Gaddis, Gardner, Garstkamp, W. Harper, Hempstead, Huston, Hyams, Johnson, Kearson, Kenner, Kinella, LaSaliniera, Laurent, Lambias, H. Lott, J. B. Lott, Lynch, Mahoney, Marie, Marvin, Matthews, McCarthy, McFarland, Meadows, Moncre, Morphy, Murray, Oplatok, Oplatok, Otto, Overton, Pond, Quinn, Raby, Riley, Ringgold, Sartain, S. Umacker, Smith, Souer, Stamps, Stanton, Stevens, Tatman, Thompson, Tounoir, Tureaud, Ullman, Wand, Washington of Assumption, Washington of Concordia, Whyland, Williams, York, Young—88.

Quorum present. Prayer by Rev. Dr. Daily. Mr. Burch, of East Baton Rouge, moved that Mr. Kenner, of Orleans, be elected Speaker protem.

Mr. Dewees, of De Soto, offered the following substitute: "That the House proceed to a permanent organization," and called for the previous question, which was ordered, and the substitute adopted.

Mr. Burch, of East Baton Rouge, moved to reconsider the vote just taken. Mr. Dewees, of De Soto, moved to lay the motion to reconsider on the table, which prevailed by a rising vote of yeas 58, nays 26.

Nominations for Speaker being in order. Mr. Dewees, of De Soto, nominated Mr. Mortimer Carr, of De Soto. Mr. Antoine, of Orleans, nominated Mr. J. Henry Burch, of East Baton Rouge. Mr. Quinn, of Orleans, nominated Mr. Isaac Ullman, of Orleans. Mr. Garstkamp, of Jefferson, moved that the nominations be closed. Carried.

The roll was called with the following result:

The following members voted for Mr. Carr: Abel, Adolphe, Baker, Barker, Barrow, Belot, Bentley, Blunt, Bowen, Brewster, Broussard, Brown, Bryan, Buchanan, Butler, Carter, Darby, Darinsburg, Davidson, Davis, Demas, Dewees, Douglas, Durio, Faulkner, Floyd, Fontelien, Gaddis, Gardner, Garstkamp, P. Harper, Hempstead, Huston, Hyams, Johnson, Kenner, Kinella, LaSaliniera, Laurent, Lambias, H. Lott, J. B. Lott, Lynch, Mahoney, Marie, Marvin, Matthews, McCarthy, McFarland, Meadows, Moncre, Moore, Morphy, Murray, Nelson, Oplatok, Otto, Overton, Pond, Raby, Riley, Ringgold, Sartain, Schumacher, Smith, Souer, Stamps, Stanton, Stevens, Tatman, Thompson, Tounoir, Tureaud, Verrett, Wand, Washington (Assumption), Waters, Whyland, E. Williams, Wilson, Worrall, York, Young—95.

The following members voted for J. H. Burch: Antoine, Barrett, Crawford, W. Harper, Kearson, Ullman, Washington, of Concordia—7.

The following members voted for Isaac Ullman: Burch, Quinn—2.

The following members voted for H. Lott: Carr—1.

Mr. Carr, of De Soto, having received a majority of the votes cast, was declared elected Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Hempstead, of Iberville, moved that a committee of four be appointed by the Clerk to conduct the Speaker elect to the chair. Carried.

The Clerk appointed Messrs. Hempstead, of Iberville, Kenner, of Orleans, Davis, of Orleans, and Davidson, of Livingston. Mr. Carr then delivered the following remarks: Gentlemen of the House of Represent-

John Eccleston loved his wife, and much as she loved him, there was a fatal want of understanding between them. Married five years ago in Paris, where they had met for the first time in the same year of their marriage, they had lived for two years a charmed life of continental travel. At the end of the two years John Eccleston, as honorable and open as the day, found himself, by the villainy of others, at the end of what he imagined perhaps an endless fortune. Instead of turning his great talent—yes, let us frankly say, genius to the use for which it was destined—instead of going to work as an artist, and painting pictures for his daily bread, by some curious want of self-knowledge he looked upon himself as wholly unfit and unworthy for the work, and with this underrating, he set his face against all the great company of painters to which he rightfully belonged, and coming back to his native land, cast about him for other work.

His father had lived abroad so many years that the son found he was a stranger in his native land, with no near or far ties of blood to take up the dropped links. His wife's family was in the same isolated condition. What associations, then, were there to bring him—this fastidious, cultivated gentleman—fitting employment? Not one. So it happened that out of his pride and his humility he came down to the place of book-keeper in the small house of Warde and Slido, importers of china. It was a hard coming down for both of them; but harder for John, who was full of all kinds of chivalric ideas about woman, and who had all his life been able to carry them out until now.

Perhaps, if they had loved each other a little less romantically, they might have accepted their new condition with much more ease and contentment; but they were moulded in a delicate sensitive fashion, with a good many of the rose-tints in their soul as well as their clay-coloring, so it was impossible for them to do otherwise than they did. Thus it happened that they made each other miserable in many ways by little concealments and subterfuges of affection. John, who hated poverty honestly and heartily, and all its long train of petty annoyances, made pretense of gay content for Alice's sake; and Alice, with the same tastes, followed his example. Fond of social life, yet isolated completely from it for three years, he made pretense of distaste for it because he fancied that it was distasteful to his wife in their altered way of living; and so it came about that the two or three men whom he had met at artists' studios—men like Clarke Steyner, who would have been glad to have visited him, were never invited to do so. And Alice, wishing all the time that John was not so morbidly sensitive on their poverty, refrained from saying a word indicative of any desire for him to bring home a friend. Thus they played at cross purposes, each making pretense of a state of feeling that was unreal out of this mistaken view of the other.

III

Clarke Steyner sat for a long time, forgetting his bachelor's tea, after Eccleston had gone, looking at the sketch upon the table. And sitting there, Valsi himself came in. Steyner, telling him of his call, handed him the paper. "You don't mean that young Eccleston did this?" "I do." "Then what in Heaven's name does he burrow down there in that counting-room for?" "Just what I'd like to know," returned Steyner, amatedly. Valsi mused a while longer over the little sketch, sitting with his chin dropped into his hand. By-and-by, in a musing tone: "Why don't Warde and Slido send him to Europe for the firm? Then some of you might give him a commission. I'd like to see what he'd make of the Christo della Moneta." Steyner lifted his head with a sudden, quick movement, but said nothing; but he evidently got a new thought which fitted an old one. He brooded over it with his tea. He smoked it in his after supper pipe. He slept and dreamed upon it. The next morning, meeting young Slido

at the bank, was it accident that set him talking of Eccleston to him? It was careful talk, not too interested; but through it he discovered what he wanted to know—that John Eccleston was invaluable as a reliable clerk, but that Warde and Slido could not afford to send another man to Europe, Warde himself being already there.

"He'd make an excellent buyer; for he has, besides an artist taste, a knowledge of the wants of the people. I wish we could afford to send him; but we are a new house, you know, and our capital isn't large," communicated Slido.

Steyner went home with a "bee in his bonnet." "Tom will do it," he said to himself, "on my suggestion, and I'll take the responsibility. It's the very thing."

Tom was his brother-in-law—an extensive importer of china, so it is easy to see where the bee buzzed.

He was right. His brother-in-law was in need of a good buyer, and had such ample confidence in Clarke that he caught gladly at the suggestion. Steyner went home triumphant, dropping a note on his way to John Eccleston—just a simple request that he would call as he went up from the office that night.

That night was the night before Thanksgiving. Every night for a week John had walked through the gay and busy crowds, noting the holiday merriment and preparations with a fierce ache at his heart. Once, so little while ago, he could have spread a brilliant feast, and welcomed a host of brilliant friends. Once he could have ransacked the splendid shops for his Alice's birthday; and now he was plodding home with-out a token, a tired and shabby man. He had turned the corner, and was right upon the bright bay-window before he thought of his engagement.

A soft light shone from the window, and with-in there was a glint of gilding, and the glow and warmth of many pictures, and in the midst of all he saw Clarke Steyner sitting, gazing idly into the fire, full of careless, happy ease. What a contrast it offered to the dim little rooms and to the dreary state he daily kept! And entering, he could not quite conceal beneath that debonaire manner the bitter pain he felt.

Steyner, like all persons of delicate sensibilities, found it difficult to approach this matter, where he himself was the apparent conferrer of a favor. So he put it off by a gracious little bustle of hospitality. He touched a bell, and there appeared such wine as Eccleston had not tasted since those "long Italian days." And sipping slowly that delicate, airy sparkle, he was led on into that region of enchantment where Art alone reigns by the skillful suggestions of his host. Either the delicate influence of the wine, or the magnetism of his companion, or it may be both together, carried him so far away from the present ills and narrowness of his lot that he gave himself up fully to the charm, and stood revealed to Steyner at his full measurement of manly breadth and culture. How rich that hour was!

With what gentle, gracious gayety he talked of some things; with what tender reverence of others, and accompanied always with an appreciation as rare as it was genial and delighted. But the hour passed; a neighboring clock struck, and recalled the present. The old pain returned, and its shadow stole into his face. The wine had lost its flavor, the fire no longer sent out warmth and radiance; there was the chill of a cold reality about every thing. What right had he to be sitting here sunning himself in an atmosphere of ease and indulgence? What right, while in the little lonely house his Alice waited for him? He rose with a sigh that was half a shudder; and it was then that Steyner began to speak. Just a few words, but of what import!—a few words modestly spoken, deprecating all generosity, as one might ask instead of giving.

A great red flush rose to Eccleston's cheek. Steyner, seeing it, mistook the cause. He had been abrupt and patronizing in his offer, perhaps, was his instantaneous thought. As if Clarke Steyner, the gentlest soul alive, could have been abrupt or patronizing! "I beg your pardon," he began, "if I

have seemed—"

And then Eccleston found his tongue. "You have seemed nothing but what is most delicate and kind," he interrupted.

The flush died away, and almost a pallor succeeded as in a few brief words he gave his acceptance and thanks. The words were so simple they might have sounded cold but for the warmth of his eyes, the intensity of his tone; and the clasp of his hand, as he said "Goodnight," had in it so much meaning that Clarke Steyner in a moment recognized a great deal—not all—of the sad, sore struggle of these years of deprivation.

IV.

The little table was set in the little room, a fire burned in the grate, and the one picture—the lovely Violante—smiled down from the wall in the evening light as Eccleston entered. Alice, sitting in abstraction over a book, glanced up with a quick smile, but the smile chased a shadow.

"How bright you look, John! Have you been to see Mr. Steyner?" she asked.

"Yes, I have been to see Mr. Steyner Alice."

There was something in his voice which Alice could not understand; something in his eyes, too—a soft sparkle she could understand as little. She was glad for him to have such pleasure with Mr. Steyner; but there came to her, as there will to the most generous sometimes, a little pang of loneliness at the contrast of this pleasure. She had been so specially lonely on this night before Thanksgiving. The tears were in her eyes a moment ago at the thought of other days, and the obscure uncertainty of the present. She had asked for sympathy and consolation; for somebody to comprehend her mood, to say some tenderer word than usual, to look some sweeter look. But she was very glad that John had had his pleasure, and yet—and yet there lurked that slender thread of pain. He sat down at table, keeping still that soft sparkle of enjoyment, quite oblivious of the extra pains Alice had taken—of the perfumed chocolate that steamed fragrant in the cups, of the pretty attire that set off her loveliness. How strange it was! Had he forgot this night, the eve of her birthday? She tried to meet his mood as usual. She tried to put out of sight all her "cross and passion," and be as bright as he; but as she met his eyes, and saw only the gleam of airy mirthfulness, and listened to his almost exaggerated jesting, a shiver ran over her.

"What is it, Ally?" he asked. Has this dreadful little house, with its thousand-and-one cracks and crannies, given you the ague?"

It was not so much the words as the light, jocose tone that jarred with the words; and to-gether it proved the drop too much. She tried to answer him, but instead burst into a flood of tears.

"Ally, Ally, what have I done?"

He started from his seat, and going to her side, bent over her with such fond concern that in her uncontrolled state she sobbed out some words that could not fail to enlighten him of her feeling.

"I have been a great blunderer, Alice, but I meant it all for the best."

And then he took her in his arms, and hiding her tearful eyes against his breast, he told her the good news that had brought such unusual gladness to his face, and such buoyancy to his manner on this night.

"And we will go back again to all the dear old scenes, John; and you will have your right place among men again, which is best of any thing. Oh, John, what a Thanksgiving this will be to us after all!"

And the tears flowed afresh, but they were no longer tears of bitterness. And presently, when they had looked at this new happiness on every side, they began to talk of Steyner, and John wondered and questioned out of the simplicity of his nature the meaning of his election. But Alice was clearer sighted.

"You dear, modest old John!" she cried, "how could any man of discernment know you as Mr. Steyner has without knowing you were worth something? And, John—"

She paused, looking up at him wistfully and shyly.

"Well, what is it?"

"I—I think we might—perhaps ask Mr. Steyner here for to-morrow."

"Alice!"

"Not if you don't wish it, dear John; but I thought you—that he might like it."

"I should like it, Alice; but you—"

"I should like it very much, John; and I am so glad that you do. I was afraid you might not, living as we do; for you never have brought him home with you, you know."

"Yes, I know; but Alice, do you know that I have not because I thought it would be distasteful to you in our way of living?"

They regarded each other a moment in eloquent silence. It was Alice who broke it, and her voice faltered as she spoke.

"Oh, John, how we have misunderstood each other all these years, and I—"

He bowed his cheek to her head, and held her a little closer as he interrupted:

"But we have loved each other, my darling, let us always remember that."

There ensued a longer silence, and then John said brightly, in his old debonaire manner: "So we are to bid Mr. Steyner here for to-morrow, are we?"

And Alice answered as brightly: "If you are not afraid he will miss his accustomed crystal and Sevres dinner-service, Mr. Eccleston?"

"I am not afraid of his missing anything if he dines with Mr. Eccleston," he answered, with tender gayety.

And so that very night Clarke Steyner was bidden to John Eccleston's Thanksgiving. I think he had no less than four invitations to great houses, where there was brilliant company, and where the least was served on crystal and Sevres; but he never hesitated a moment when, John coming in upon him unexpectedly, said simply: "I want you to dine with us to-morrow if you can, Mr. Steyner."

"My dear fellow," he answered, quickly and cordially, "nothing would give me more pleasure."

And sitting at Mrs. Eccleston's right hand the next day, I am very sure that he did not miss the crystal and Sevres dinner-service. And sitting there too, he comprehended more of John Eccleston's life than he had ever done before. Of course they talked of Art; neither Clarke Steyner nor John Eccleston could be long in any company where there was any sympathy or taste that way without drifting into it; and so, of course, the Violante was discussed. Mr. Steyner was delighted with it, and even testified Mrs. Alice with his praises. He had not meant to proffer his request quite yet, but he was led into it involuntarily by this talk.

"I have been thinking," he said, slowly and thoughtfully, looking all the time at the Violante, "if you would make me another copy of that fancy head, when you are in Dresden—I know that no copy but yours will satisfy me now."

Alice's eyes literally glowed with the intensity of her delight; but her husband—"that dear, modest old John"—as she called him, murmured out something about Mr. Steyner's overrating his ability; and then Mr. Steyner loosed his tongue utterly, and told him of Valsi's praise.

Again Clarke Steyner saw that great red flush mount to John Eccleston's brow; and for a moment, as once before, John could find no words to speak, and when he did it was in his gay and pleasant fashion; but it touched Steyner more than any gravity. And over their cigars a little later, it was decided that the copy should be made. And a little later still, when the guest had gone and the husband and wife sat alone together, she said in a low voice:

"John, I think this is the happiest birthday, and the happiest Thanksgiving of my life."

He put his hand caressingly on her head:

"My love, I know it is my happiest Thanksgiving." There was a little upward look which dwelt a moment on the Violante, then lifted thoughtfully beyond; far beyond into no earthly space that look went.

It was John Eccleston's Thanksgiving.